

# CONNECTICUT PACKAGE STORES ASSOCIATION



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Good afternoon Senator Leone, Representative Baram, Senator Witkos and Representative Carter and members of the General Law Committee. The Connecticut Package Stores Association (CPSA) represents Connecticut off-premise package store retailers. We work to promote and protect their integral role as one of the three tiers of the alcohol beverage industry in CT. We are submitting this testimony on the following bills:

Proposed H.B. No. 6541 AN ACT ESTABLISHING A CRAFT ALCOHOLIC LIQUOR DISTILLER PERMIT.

CPSA supports this concept and has worked out agreeable language with other stakeholders. However, there is a craft distiller bill being heard on February 26<sup>th</sup> which has the language that has been agreed to and we will be supporting that bill.

S.B. No. 875 (RAISED) AN ACT ESTABLISHING A CHEESE SHOP WINE RETAILER PERMIT.

As discussed with HB 5349, CPSA did not support legislation allowing cheese products to be sold in their stores in the 2012 omnibus alcohol beverage bill. Like all compromise legislation that portion remained in there. CPSA surveyed stores and it was determined that very few retailers are selling cheese as a result of the 2012 law. If current cheese-shop retailers want to own package store permits there appears to be nothing disallowing them from doing so. If the Committee would like to clarify what types of cheese package stores can sell, limiting it to certain types of cheese for instance, we would not oppose that measure. We would also not oppose a repeal of the law. Additionally, currently package stores that are selling cheese are not regulated by the local health departments and we believe the law should be clarified that those entities must follow the same regulations as any entity selling cheese.

Proposed H.B. No. 6078 AN ACT ALLOWING MICROBREWERIES TO SELL KEGS OF BEER TO CONSUMERS

CPSA believes that there is a three tier system for a good reason and that it currently works quite well. Microbrewries can currently sell product right from their facilities which we believe helps build the brand. Package stores support our local microbreweries and we encourage the sale of their products, including kegs, in our stores. Anything that can be done to encourage keg sales in our stores we will welcome.